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**Impact of studying a master program in ELT:  
graduates' perception**

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# **IMPACT OF STUDYING A MASTER PROGRAM IN ELT: GRADUATES' PERCEPTION**

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# ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to explore the impact the master's program in teaching English (MEI) at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla has on its graduates. It principally aims to identify the impact the program has on their professional competitiveness, economic status and competence. This research also helps identify the strength and opportunities for improvement of the program. The methodology employed is a Case Study Mixed method analysis in order to accomplish the goals of this study on the impressions the graduates, from generations 2005 – 2017, had after completing the MEI program.

After conducting a questionnaire and interviews, participants reported an economic increment in their salaries after completing and graduating from the program. Furthermore, participants' level of research competence, ELT knowledge and language proficiency increased which led them to compete for jobs at higher levels of education. Finally, the research revealed Human Resources, curriculum, and international participation to be the strengths of the program while curriculum, professors, research mentoring among others were identify as areas that could continue to improve in order to maintain the quality of the program for stakeholders for years to come

# DEDICATION

This thesis project which has required intense work, leads to the completion of my master's degree. This great accomplishment could not have been achieved without the help of my family, friends, and colleagues.

First and foremost, I am dedicating it to my beloved parents Pilar and Jorge who, regardless of the path I take, have always been by my side. Thank you for supporting me, for encouraging me, and for keeping me calm in the difficult moments of this journey.

Secondly I would like to dedicate it to my sister, Pily. You are the spark that illuminates my life, and the reason to try harder every day.

Finally, I would like to dedicate it to two of my friends. Tere for supporting me and encouraged me at the beginning of my teaching path. Eliska for planting in me the idea of studying this master's degree. Both have been good examples and who have taught me to work hard for the things I aspire to achieve.

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

With the growing importance of English as the primary means of communication between professionals in a globalized society, the professionalization of English as Foreign Language Teachers becomes a vital component. As the English language has acquired such relevance, it is important to acquire it in countries like Mexico which are part of the so-called ‘expansion circle’ (Kachru, 1992). Therefore, a need of well-prepared instructors who help learners as noted by David Hayes, & Kyungsuk Chang (2012, p. 108) that “educational change depends on what teachers do and think” as they have a responsibility towards “equipping a nation’s future workforce” (David Hayes, & Kyungsuk Chang, 2012, p. 109). Thus, this study intends to examine the impact having completed a master’s program has on its graduates.

The evaluation of educational programs is a key element of quality education in order to guarantee that the program remains pertinent and meets the needs of the learners who will enter the professional field. This study is focused on the master’s program in teaching English (MEI) at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla. A Case Study Mixed method analysis was used in order to accomplish the goals of this study on the impressions of the graduates of the MEI program from generations 2005 – 2017.

As previously mentioned, the importance of the global growth of the English language has resulted in an “increasing demand world-wide for competent English teachers and for more effective approaches to their preparation and professional development” (Richards, 2008, p. 1). In the field of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE), academic knowledge has been constructed by Master’s degree (MA) programs. Thus, the improvement of any program’s curriculum in order to determine “where we are and where we need to go” (Wiles & Bondi, 2001, p. 20) as “the curriculum is influenced by elements from the past, present, and future” (Espinosa, & Soto, 2015, p. 14). As the current study addresses the impact the MEI program has on its graduates, it will help to understand the effectiveness of the program previously mentioned and could guide upcoming programs within the field. This evaluation is needed in order to assist stakeholders involved in the innovation and implementation of the curriculum with the purpose of having better prepared professionals ready to face ELT classrooms.

## **1.2. PROBLEM**

The field of Second language teacher education (SLTE) has become a well-established area within applied linguistics and TESOL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) (Burns, & Richards, 2009). The origin of this field brought the creation of short training programs and certificates, and then this discipline brought a body of specialized academic knowledge and theory in the form of MA programs (Richards, 2008). At the same time the field of SLTE was created by researchers and theorists interested in language education, and hence, teacher preparation (Kanakri, 2017).

As previously mentioned, as part of the specialized academic knowledge and theory, MA programs were created. These programs, which are imparted in universities, are meant to provide teachers with qualifications in teacher development. The Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla offers a program which has as the objective to develop in the teacher/students the necessary competences in the area of teaching /learning English. The master's in teaching English (MEI) is a program specialized in preparing teachers in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT).

The purpose of this research project is to study the impact the MEI program has on the professional competitiveness, economic status and competence of its graduates. At the same time, it gathers its graduate's opinion on the innovation of contents. Finally, the study covers the strength and opportunities for improvement of the program.

### **1.3. JUSTIFICATION**

Richardson (as cited in Kanakri, 2017, p. 70) points out that “teachers along with the learners are seen as the center of education”. Thus, it is also important to know how well teachers are being prepared and the impact those programs have on their graduates.

According to Vélez-Rendón, (2002, p. 458) “issues related to second language teacher education are largely absent from this literature” because SLTE is a recent field. In the book *Experiences of Second Language Teacher Education*, Wright and Beaumont (2015) made a collection of experiences from SLTE practitioners and researchers from many different contexts. At the same time Burns and Richards (2009) organized a collection of

key reading on SLTE which offer an overview of the current debates on the field.

Furthermore, according to Peacock (2009, p. 259-260) in the field of SLTE “it is important for every teacher-training program to have a system for regular internal evaluation” and that there are some studies regarding the evaluation of programs (Coskun, & Daloglu 2010., Farrell, 2019., Karakas, 2012., Mitchell, 1990 & Peacock, 2009).

Regarding the studies made to MA programs there are some made in other fields like Health (Hatamizadeh, Mirkhani, Makarem, Petrami, & Vameghi, 2011., Plugge & Cole, 2011., and Richardson, MacRae, Schwartz, Bankston, & Kosten, 2008), of Business administration (Baruch, & Peiperl, 2000., Chumney, Ragucci, & Jones, 2008., Mihail, & Antigoni Elefterie, 2006., Ryan, Silvanto, & Brown, 2013, and Schuster, Zimmerman, Schertzer, & Beamish, 1998) and in ELT there are just a few regarding MA and Ph.D studies based on specific topics of academic development (Bilican, 2014, Orr, 2010). Few researches have addressed this issue, such as the ones studied by Ramírez-Romero & Pamplón Irigoyen (2012), which reported the importance of teacher developments and preparations as well as on the need of greater teaching and professional development.

With the above in mind, this study will address the lack of investigation into the effectiveness of MA in ELT programs in Mexico and contribute to a greater understanding of the needs of professionals in this field. This study will also provide a clearer perspective to administrators, academics and other stakeholders on the effectiveness of the program as reported by its graduates. The study intends to identify the areas of opportunity for the program, thus providing evaluation data that could contribute to the ongoing program

curriculum development. As a part of the research, this study gives a better view of the effects of completing the MEI at the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla has on its graduates.

#### **1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This research addresses the following research questions:

1. What impact on economic status do participants report as a result of successfully graduating from the maestría en Enseñanza del Inglés of the Facultad de Lenguas of the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla?
2. What impact on professional competitiveness do participants report as a result of successfully graduating from the previously mentioned context?
3. What impact on professional competence do participants report as a result of successfully graduating from the previously mentioned context?
4. What do the participants in the previously mentioned context consider to be the principal strengths and opportunities for improvement for the program?

The previous research questions will be used to provide a real perspective of the MEI program from graduates' perspective.

## **1.5. CONCLUSION**

Having presented the general topic and a discussion of the problem that this work addresses, the work will move forward in the following manner. Chapter II presents a review of the relevant literature upon which this study is built. Chapter III presents a thorough description of the context, participants and the instruments used to gather the data in addition to the description of the case study mixed methodology employed to analyze the elements in the data sample. In Chapter IV, the results of the study are presented and discussed. Relevant results are highlighted in order to provide the reader with a clearer view of the issues. Finally, Chapter V shows the conclusions, the contributions, and limitations of this study as well as the recommendations for further research.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

#### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

In this section, the theoretical background of the present research project will be briefly reviewed. An overview of the importance of the English language will first be provided. This overview may provide insight into the importance of second language teaching education. Thereafter, the need for evaluating programs regarding English teachers' education. Finally, the MA and curriculum in ELT will be described.

#### **2.2. IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

The English language has acquired great importance since the first voyages to the Americas, Asia, and the Antipodes. It continued its spread through the expansion of the British colonies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century along with its adoption as an official or semi-official language and the emerging of the United States as the leading economic power in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Crystal, 2019). These are the two main factors that gave the English language its actual status of “world language” as stated by Crystal (2019). The world was in need of a suitable way of communicating between citizens from different contexts. As a result, English has become a lingua Franca which facilitates communication in various contexts where the participants' mother tongue is different as in the UN, which was in “the pressure to adopt a single lingua franca” which will facilitate communication and cut down the cost of interpretation/translation (Crystal, 2003, p. 12).



English has become the primary language in use and according to Crystal (2019), there are 2.3 billion participants all around the world that speak the language. It has grown in such a way that it is used in many fields. Rao (2019, p. 66) claims that English “is the most widely used language in the world in international trade, diplomacy, mass entertainment, international telecommunications, and scientific publications as well as publishing newspapers and other books.” Moreover Dunlap (2012, p. 1) testifies that “English was everywhere—on the streets of Las Ramblas filled with tourists, in the cafes being used by Italians and Germans, and in my apartment, which was inhabited by three Swedish Speakers and me.”

In the process of this expansion into the world and the need to accommodate global communications, terms were created to represent the way English is spread, acquired, and used across cultures and languages. The world is divided into three circles in which the countries are grouped depending on their relationship with the English language. According to Kachru (1985), these circles are labeled as *inner* circle- which refers to the traditional use of English as their primary language, the *outer* circle- which involves the earlier phases of the spread of English and its institutionalization in non-native contexts, and the *expanding* circle, which includes nations that have recognized English as an international language and there is neither a history of colonization by members of the inner circle nor has English been given an administrative status.

Now as English is everywhere, countries such as the UK, the US, Australia, and South Africa, which are part of the *inner* circle, categorize the English language as a native language. Meanwhile, in the countries from the *outer* circle, English is widespread and is used for internal purposes as in administration, education, and broadcasting. For these countries, the English language has taken the role of a second language (ESL). Finally, there are countries such as México, which are in the *expanding* circle and give English an external use to communicate with other countries and have developed an English teaching tradition. These countries use English as a foreign language (EFL) (Quirk, 1985).

The English language has become the tool of communication between countries all around the world and Mexico is not the exception. Mexico is located in what Kachru (1985) called the *expanding* circle in which English is categorized as a foreign language and where it is taught as a second language (ESL) (Calderón, 2015a; Despaigne, 2010; Lengeling Kimberley, 2010). According to the British Council (2015), English has been taught in Mexican schools since the '60s at a secondary level in the private sector as well as in the public sector. In the public sector even though it was taught, it did not obtain curriculum importance until the implementation of the *Programa Nacional de Inglés en Educación Básica* (PNIEB) in 2009, as it is described in some studies (British Council, 2015; Quezada, 2013; Ramírez Romero, Sayer, & Pamplón Irigoyen, 2014; Roux, & Valladares, 2014). This program had as a target the implementation of teaching English in grades from kindergarten up to the 6th grade. Subsequently as a basis, the PRONI (*Programa Nacional de Inglés*) was established due to the relevance English has as a competitive advantage, granting students access to more information, professional improvement and working

opportunities as well as social mobility (Ramírez-Romero & Sayer, 2016; SEP, 2016). The goal of this program is to provide the English language to students in their basic education and at the end of it get an internationally recognized certification as a second language, or third in the case of the indigenous language communities (*Whiteboard. Estrategia Nacional de Inglés*, 2017, 0:23–01:35).

The implementation of these new educational programs by the Mexican government in such a short time put stress on the available human resources and Mexico was in need of well-trained teachers to satisfy the demand. According to the British Council (2015), during the implementation of these programs, the Mexican government established qualifications that could not be met by available teachers; therefore, a “perfil minimo” (or minimum profile) was created, in which the teacher had to accredit a higher level than the one they teach.

### **2.3. SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION**

The world today is changing, a cause of globalization, which has led to a great “demand to learn English as the international lingua franca” (Wright & Beaumont, 2015, p.67) as it is used more by non-natives speakers than by native speakers to communicate with each other (Crystal, 2003; Crystal, 2019). Likewise, for a country to have both social and economic development in the global context, it requires that a good portion of its citizenry acquires the appropriate English skills. At the center of these affairs are English teaching and the

growing demand for competent English teachers (Richards, 2008) as they are recognized as the center in the improvement of teaching and learning in school are becoming an important factor in “equip[ping] a nation's future workforce” with the capacity to compete in a globalized world (Wang, Lin, Spalding, Odell, & Klecka, as cited in Hayes, & Chang, 2012, p108). With these issues in mind and the necessity of researching the subject in order to improve the teaching of English and teacher development, the field of Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE) was created. This term second language will be used to refer to English as a foreign, third, or additional language.

As English expanded, the need for English language teaching also started its expansion, being during the 1960s a “major period of expansion worldwide” (Richards, 2008, p. 159). Teacher education is not just about teachers and their education. It is infinitely more than the two put together. It is often called upon to tackle critical issues and questions that go far beyond their boundaries. At the beginning and with the implementation of the new methodologies and approaches to teacher training, short training programs and certificates appeared. With the arrival of the discipline of applied linguistics, a new discipline was founded on the basis of a body of specialized academic knowledge which gave rise to the MA programs. In the 1990s the distinction between practice and theory was somewhat solved by distinguishing between *teacher training* from *teacher development* (Richards, 2008). The first one refers to the activities directed to the teacher's present situation and most of the time aiming to short-term goals and the skills learned are related to specific teaching context and are acquired through practice in controlled environments and by observing experienced teachers (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Teaching

development, on the other hand, is directed to the development of teachers in a longer-term goal which may involve collaborative and/or autonomous learning, and it aids teacher's understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers (Crandall, 2000). When talking about teacher development, it is important to mention that the programs under this denomination are involved in examining teaching practices, their beliefs, values, and principles; collaborating with peers in projects and in the discussion of related issues and programs should go beyond personal and individual reflection (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Richards (2008) argues that teacher development conveys in mastering the discipline of applied linguistics and these qualifications are offered mainly at MA programs.

Teacher education is more than putting teachers and their education together, but to tackle critical issues and questions that go beyond their boundaries (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Freeman (2016) believes that teacher education is a link between “what is known in the field with what is done in the classroom, and it does so through the individuals whom we educate as teachers” (as cited in Farrell, 2018, p. 1). In the past, teachers with a fluent level of English, either because of being a native speaker or having acquired it sufficiently, were the only ones related to teaching English as a second language (Day, 1993; Trappes-Lomax, & Ferguson, 2002). Furthermore, knowledge-base kind of programs were the only kind of program needed to educate teachers and in which practice was not really considered until almost the end (Burns, & Richards, 2009; Crandall, 2000; Johnson, 2009; Johnson, & Freeman, 2001; Tedick, 2005; Tütüniş, & Yalman, 2020). However, nowadays, with the big demand for qualified teachers, being proficient at the target language and knowing about its structure are not sufficient (Kissau & Algozzine, 2017; Potocka, 2011). Student

teachers (STs) should be engaged in classes such as the ones related to linguistics, psycholinguistics, culture, and society, also in aspects such as pedagogy, especially foundations, methods, and practicum (Johnson, 2009; Kanakri, 2017; Vélez-Rendón, 2002). In teaching programs, there should be as well a "great focus on: 1) practical experiences such as observations, practice teaching, and opportunities for curriculum and materials development, 2) classroom-centered or teacher research, 3) teacher beliefs and teacher cognition in language teacher education" (Crandall, 2000, p. 34) and at the same time, according to Trappes-Lomax, & Ferguson (2002) learning does not happen in isolation as there is a need of a community and there is a need for senior and experienced teacher educators who push STs into develop the knowledge and skills necessary to improve their professional development (Kumaravadevelu, 2012; Pawlak, 2011).

Professional development programs are a series of courses with a common goal, which should provide STs with the necessary tools in order for them to function as "qualified" ESL teachers in any classroom setting. However, in most cases the courses selected in these programs do not implement effective and systematic practices or do not consider STs needs but rather, they are based in traditions, bureaucracy or by the desires of a member of the academic staff (Bilican, 2014; Farrell, 2019; Fox, & White, 2010). On the contrary programs must keep STs updated, refined and well-prepared to become effective teachers and be able to change and change their students (Nabi-Ranjbari et al., 2000). Therefore, having qualified teachers requires these programs to enhance the quality of teacher education which could be achieved through evaluation.

## 2.4. EVALUATION

In the search of having quality programs which are in charge of preparing the qualified teachers required in today's world, there is a need for evaluation. As described in Rea-Dickins, & Germaine, (1993) evaluation is part of our everyday life, from the way we talk about the weather, or by listening to a lecture or a political speech, all the way to judging the way the speaker in a radio station talks, we are making evaluations on everything. When it comes to teaching and learning, evaluation also appears as an intrinsic factor (Rea-Dickins, & Germaine, 1993).

Evaluation is defined by some authors as a systematic process in which information is collected and analyzed in order to promote the improvement of the curriculum and assess the efficacy and effectiveness within a context in a particular institution involved. (Brown 1989 & 1995 cited in Solís Hernández, 2009; Kader, 2016; Kanatlar, 1996; Küçükoğlu, 2015). Adding to this idea, Lynch (1996 as cited in Solís Hernández, 2009) and Ornstein and Hunkins (1998 as cited in Mappiasse, & Sihes, 2014) state that this is a process in which information is gathered or obtained with the purpose to judge and bring changes or make decisions. As established by Robinson (2003 in Peacock, 2009) and by Stufflebeam, Foley, Gephart, Hammond, Merriman and Provus (1971 cited in Kiely, & Rea-Dickins, 2005) and for the purpose of this paper evaluation refers to the process to collect, analyse, interpret and provide useful information for forming judgment and making decisions regarding a particular program to continue or improve its effectiveness and efficacy.

The process of evaluation has gained substantial importance that is needed in academic programs to examine their progress, as well as to measure the results which will provide information to maintain the developed quality along with the negative effects (Küçükoğlu, 2018). As it could deal with information of various parties such as students' views, evaluation and assessment usually provoke confusion. This confusion may occur due to the fact that both words are translated into evaluation in some languages. According to the RAE (Real Academia Española, 2014) the word evaluation refers to 'the action and effect of evaluating', and it does not specify context or people. According to Soontornwipast, (2008) this also happens in the Thai language while in the USA evaluation is also used to describe a student's performance. For the purpose of this research assessment deals with students' skills and progress or achievement in a language, while evaluation goes beyond that and tries to contribute to decision making through informing the results obtained (Soontornwipast, 2008).

When evaluation comes to mind there are two types. According to Bilican, (2014) there is the formative evaluation and the summative evaluation. As stated in Küçükoğlu, (2015) and in Rea-Dickins, & Germaine, (1993) formative evaluation deals with the gathering of information of ongoing programs in which the strength and weaknesses are identified for the development or improvement of plans or actions. This type of evaluation deals with the improvement of curriculum and it is mainly applied while the program is being implemented. On the other hand, summative evaluation relies on examining the effect of a program which is normally done at the end of the program (Bilican, 2014; Weir, & Roberts, 1994). It also has the function of informing whether something should continue or



be discontinued as it will reveal the effectiveness and efficiency of the program (Küçüköğlü, 2015; Rea-Dickins, & Germaine, 1993). Even though these approaches focus on different areas, it is important to state that program evaluation has as a main objective the improvement of programs in which STs enroll in order to gain the knowledge and the skills required in the world of today.

## **2.5. MASTER'S DEGREES**

The programs within SLTE can vary from teaching training programs, to teacher development programs up to diplomas and MA programs. This last one is generally related to teaching English as a second or foreign language (TESOL) and it “normally prepares graduates to work with adults who do not speak English as their first language” (M. Obeidat, & M. Shehadeh, 2020, p. 28). The MA in TESOL is a professional degree targeting prospective or novice teachers who will focus their teaching on communities where English is a foreign, second or third language (Karim, Shahed, Mohamed, Rahman, & Ismail, 2019; M. Obeidat, & M. Shehadeh, 2020). Moreover the master’s degree programs takes 2-3 years to equip STs with the skills to improve student literacy through literature and writing (Grad Schools, 2019 as cited in M. Obeidat, & M. Shehadeh 2020), also STs “will learn the way in which cultural dynamics can be understood, language abilities can be developed, social skills can be fostered, and curricula can be created” (Learn, 2019 as cited in M. Obeidat, & M. Shehadeh 2020, p 28).

## **2.6. CURRICULUM**

A core component of an educational program is the curriculum and it also takes part of the process of program evaluation. As this concept has no exact definition, Ornstein and Hunkins (2004 as cited in Tunç, 2010) define it as “a plan for action or a written document that includes strategies for achieving desired goals or ends” which “deals with experiences of the learner” (p.15), and “it can also be seen as a structure for guiding people so as to measure the expected goal of a system” (as cited in Mappiasse, & Sihes, 2014, p. 118). Moreover, Su, (2012) states that curriculum stands for a process, a plan, a document; a process of selecting the content to study, a plan or a blueprint of implementing educational activities and it also could be considered as a document or outline of a course program. Curriculum also provides the “necessary information such as the subjects to be taught, the sequence of topics, objectives for the students, the materials, and the assessment” (Baskan and Özcan, 2011 as cited in Bilican, 2014, p. 113).

## **2.7. CONCLUSION**

English is a language which has evolved and become a lingua franca as it is used as a communication tool all around the world. It has also become important not just as a native language but also in countries such as Mexico where it takes the role of a foreign language, second language or third language. Therefore, in Second Language Teacher Education, the importance of providing competent professionals who have acquired skills and tools through various programs. And the way to ensure having well prepared and updated professionals is to keep those programs updated and by meeting the needs of those professionals’ current contexts. This is why having program evaluation is the best way to

collect, analyse, interpret, and provide useful information to update all the aspects of MA programs including their curriculum.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

Having described the main concepts related to this research report in chapter I, this chapter will describe the methodological procedures that were carried out in order to collect and analyze data for the current study. Furthermore, this chapter includes the description of the context, the characteristics of the participants involved, and the instruments used to gather the data to be analysed. Finally, a conclusion of the chapter is provided.

#### **3.2. CONTEXT**

This research project is focused on the impacts the participants had after completing the Master in English Teaching program at the Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla. The program has welcomed eight generations since its creation in 2005. This program has a duration of 4 semesters and is open for postulation every 2 years. This Master's program is one of five programs related to English teaching in the country that are members of the Programa Nacional de Posgrados de Calidad (PNCP) from CONACYT (Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, 2019). This program has been part of the PNCP from CONACYT since 2014.

### **3.3. PARTICIPANTS**

The participants who were part of this study are the graduates from the master's program in English Teaching at the BUAP. There was a total of 92 participants, all of whom formed part of the seven previous generations of this program. The participants' age range between 27 and 59 years old. 66 participants are female, 25 are male and 1 of the participants "other". The majority of participants are Mexican, but there are also American, British, and Hungarian. All the participants have a bachelor's degree, 84 of them have one related to the English language or English Language teaching while 8 of the participants studied a bachelor's degree not related to the English language or English Language teaching.

### **3.4. DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURE**

The number of participants for this research project required an efficient and fast tool to gather the data. Thus, the questionnaire was chosen as the principal instrument to be answered by all the participants. The semi structured interview was also chosen to gather data from a smaller sample of the participants. Both the questionnaire and the interview were done in English.

In order to answer the research questions the present study was divided into two parts. The first part refers to the questionnaire (see annex A) and the second part refers to the interviews (see annex B). The questionnaire was designed to best answer the research questions. This questionnaire was sent to most of the graduate teachers from the Master's program on February 3<sup>rd</sup>. The email list was reviewed and updated and then the

questionnaire was sent again to the missing graduates on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. This procedure was repeated again on March 15<sup>th</sup> which resulted in 92 participants answering the questionnaire.

The questionnaire used for gathering the data needed to be divided into sections. After a small description of the content of the questionnaire and the approximate time participants will take in answering, the questionnaire is divided into five parts. The first part asks questions related to the participant's basic information such as their name, age, gender, nationality, mother tongue and year of graduation from the Master's program. The second part of the questionnaire refers to the Bachelor degrees, additional master degrees, PhDs or any specialization obtained in which participants had to mention the name of the degree, the institution's name and the year of graduation. The following section seeks to gather information regarding the participant's laboral context. This section deals with years of experience before entering the program, number of current jobs they are working as well as the kind of institution they work in and their salary range. The fourth part is the one related to the program and its inquiries about the main reason and specific reason for why they chose to apply for the Master's program in Teaching English as well as the description on the impact of graduating from the Master's program, the economic benefits, the tools/competencies expected to obtain and the ones actually obtained, the strength and the elements of improvement, the way the program prepared them to confront challenges and to compete for any job opportunity. The last part inquiries about their intention to study a PhD and the areas of interest that such a Ph.D. might include.

The second instrument that was used in this research project was the interview. The interview was designed to be answered by a smaller group of participants. The participants were chosen randomly and there were two participants chosen for each generation. The fourteen participants were contacted on May 31st, and the interviews were scheduled according to the participants availability. The interviews did not take more than 15 minutes, and they were conducted via zoom.

### **3.5. DATA ANALYSIS**

According to Cresswell (1998, p.61) a case study is “an exploration of a ‘bounded system’ of a case or multiple cases over time through detail, in depth data collection”, which was used to analyze the data as each question was divided into categories to give a better understanding of the phenomenon studied in this research paper. Complementing this methodology, the data was analysed under a mixed method analysis. “A mixed methods case study design is a type of mixed methods study in which the quantitative and qualitative data collection, results, and integration are used to provide in-depth evidence for a case(s) or develop cases” (Creswell & Plano Clarke, 2017, p.185).

The data gathered helped understand a simple case, which refers to the MEI program, and the effect having completed the program had on its graduates. The data was divided into several parts in order to be analysed under different methods. The first part was the information regarding the questionnaire’s sections: personal information, degree in

higher education, laboral context and doctorate studies. This first part provided quantitative data in the form of percentages, which was transformed into Charts and are shown in the next chapter. The data of each question from the first part provides a general view of the background of the participants.

The second part refers to the open-ended questions regarding the questionnaire's section: MEI program. This second part provided quantitative data which was analyzed in conjunction with quantitative data. Each question from this section was divided into categories. Then each answer from the participants was thoroughly analysed and categorised. At the same time quantitative data was obtained from these answers in order to have a better understanding of the case studied. Finally, the interviews were also analysed in order to reinforce the data obtained from the questionnaires. All of the data sources were triangulated in order to provide a more complete picture of the case being studied.

### **3.6. CONCLUSIONS**

After explaining the general topics related to this study in the previous chapter, the current one gives a specific description of this study. This research paper studies the impacts the participants had after completing the MEI program at the BUAP. After collecting all the information from the 92 participants through questionnaires, some interviews were made to corroborate the data gathered. All the questions in the questionnaire were analysed under a case study mixed method through which categories, percentages and data were obtained in order to answer the research questions.



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **ANALYSIS AND KEY FINDINGS**

#### **4.1. INTRODUCTION**

Having presented an overview of the study in Chapter 1, a theoretical overview of the literature in Chapter 2, and a description of the methodological procedures used to gather and analyze data in chapter 3, the results of the data analysis and key findings will be presented. The chapter is organized into sections according to the different dimensions of inquiry within the questionnaire. Excerpts from the interview are triangulated with the quantitative questionnaire data in order to integrate the participants' voices into the analysis. A summary of key findings is provided at the end of the chapter.

#### **4.2. QUESTIONNAIRE**

The investigation required a data gathering instrument that could be efficient in terms of time, research efforts, and financial resources, and according to Dörnyei (2002) questionnaires achieve this goal as they gather a large amount of information from any size group faster than other instruments. According to Brown (cited in Dörnyei, 2002, p. 6) "Questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers."

The questionnaire created for this study is divided into five sections with a total of 35 items, which include multiple-choice questions, checkbox questions, and open-ended questions. The first part of the instrument refers to the personal information of the participants. The second part asks about additional degrees in higher education that the participants might have. The third section inquires about the participants' Laboral context before entering the program and currently. The fourth section seeks information about the participants' perspectives towards various dimensions of the master's program. The final section inquires about current or future plans to study for a doctorate degree.

### **4.3. INTERVIEWS**

The current research paper required a second instrument in order to triangulate the data obtained after the questionnaire. The second instrument used was the interview with a total of 4 questions. The interview was made to be answered by a smaller group of participants which were chosen randomly from each generation. A total of fourteen participants were contacted on May 31st for the first time and the interviews were scheduled according to the participants availability. At the end of the process there were twelve participants successfully interviewed. These interviews did not take more than 15 minutes and they were done via zoom or meet.

### **4.4. PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION**

The first part of the questionnaire deals with the personal information of the participants. The study was sent and answered by 92 participants from the previous seven generations of the Master's program in English Teaching at the BUAP. The participants represent 76% of

the total of the graduates of whom 72% are women, 27% are men and 1% report their gender as “other.” The participant’s nationalities are Mexican with 97% while the other 3% of the participants are either American, British, or Bulgarian. Therefore, 97% of the participants speak Spanish as their mother tongue, 2% of the participants speak English, and 1% speak Bulgarian. 90% of the participants studied a bachelor’s degree related to English language and teaching languages while the other 10% studied a bachelor’s degree unrelated to English language or English teaching. 89% of the participants accomplish their Bachelor’s degree studies at the Benemerita Universidad Autonoma de Puebla. One of the requirements when entering the program is to have some experience in the field, and 52% of the participants had between 3 to 5 years of experience. 21% of them had 6 to 10 years of experience, 15% had 11 to 15 years of experience, 10% had 16 to 20 years of experience while only 2% had no experience. Currently, 65% of the participants work at only one job. 25% of the participants have a second job while 10% reported working at 3 different jobs in order to meet their financial goals. It is worth noting here that 65% of the program graduates seem to have found economic stability in a single workplace where they are able to fully dedicate their professional efforts, and this might be considered a strength of the program. It is also worth noting that 72% of the beneficiaries of the program are female Mexican nationals with a background in languages, which is one of the stated target audiences of the program. That said, it might be considered an area of opportunity that 35% of all graduates need to work more than one job in order to meet their economic goals. Even though only 8% of graduates cited economic reasons as their motivation for studying a master’s degree (see 4.4 below), providing increased economic and professional opportunities should be an implicit goal of the program. It would seem that more than a third of the MEI alumni are not reaching a professional position that allows them to work in

a single professional environment that provides sufficient economic opportunity after graduating from the program (see 4.4 below for a more detailed discussion).

#### **4.5. INFORMATION OF THE PROGRAM**

Having explained the background of this study, the result of this will be explained as follows. First is the economic impact that the MEI has had on its graduates. It will be followed by the competencies acquired by the participant while completing the master's program. Followed by the section of strengths and opportunities to improve, where there will be explained the categories which the participants consider the master's program to be strong at and which ones need to be considered for improvement. Finally, the last part will discuss whether the participants felt competent when finishing the program.

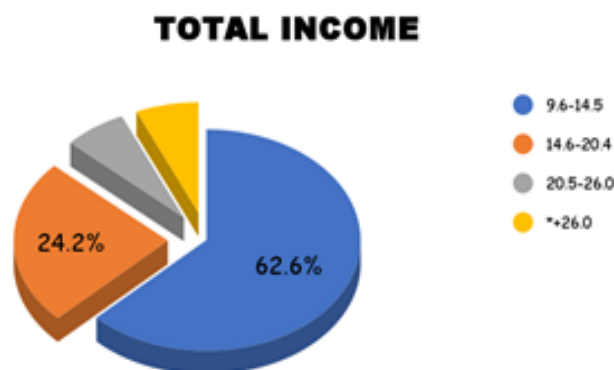
##### **4.5.1. ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Graduating from the MEI has enriched its graduates' lives in several areas such as economic, personal, or professional growth. The following section will focus on the economic factors. It will describe the current economic status of the graduates, as well as the way graduating from the MEI has impacted their income, either in a positive or in a negative way.

In the first part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to select the range in which they can be situated according to their current economic status. As can be seen in Chart 1 most of the participants situate themselves earning between \$9,600 to \$14,500

pesos, which correspond to 62.6% of the participants. 24.5% of graduates earn a monthly income between \$14,600 and \$20,400 pesos. 6% earn a monthly income between \$20,500 and \$26,00 pesos, and the last 6% of graduates earn an income higher than \$26,000 pesos per month.

Chart 1. Total income



When stating their reasons for studying a master's program, only 8% of the participants indicated economic reasons. According to the National Survey of College Graduates (NSF) (2013), master's graduates enjoyed 17% to 25% greater benefits than those of bachelor's degree recipients. Taking this point into consideration, the results obtained in this study corroborates the facts as 65.2% of the graduates perceived an increment in their income. From this percentage of graduates, 11.2% stated to have attained an increment in their income of 20% to 29%, as one of them mentioned "My income is higher than some of my co-workers, thanks to having this degree. About 20%." (Participant 24).

9% of the graduates who perceived an economical benefit, earn between 30 to 39% more than what they previously did before studying the MEI, as mentioned by one of the graduates "Due to the pandemic the economic benefits have been limited. Yet, I consider my income has increased about 30%" (Participant 89). There is a small percentage of graduates that observed that with the degree they could obtain a better job, which led to better economic benefits. This percentage represents the 3.4% who obtained a 40 to 49% increment in their salary, as expressed by one of the participants "there have been some economic benefits since I was able to get into the public sector with a full-time job and an hourly job as a coordinator in a languages school. It has increased incomes by about 40%" (Participant 70).

The participants who obtained more than a 50% increase in their income represent 9%, but most of them did not mention how long it took them to achieve the gain after obtaining the degree. However, there were two participants who mentioned a wage increase just after graduating "As a result of graduating from the MEI, my incomes increased the 50%" (Participant 63), and other participants mentioned obtaining a promotion 6 years later. "Right after the MEI program, my salary was exactly the same as before. However, it was until 6 years later that I got the promotion and my salary increased approximately 75%." (Participant 32). The last 32.6% of the participants who obtained an increment in their income mentioned that they also obtained

better job positions, which was not limited to a monetary benefit, "Due to the promotion I got, I also got economic benefits." (Participant 44).

Other kinds of benefits were acquired in a more formal manner, "The job benefits in general, I would say, are more stable and tangible." (Participant 42).

Unfortunately, 34.8% of graduates have not perceived an economical benefit from obtaining the degree, because there are schools where "there is an established salary for teachers/professors who are hourly pay. In other words, degrees don't affect salaries." (Participant 27). Simultaneously participants answer that not being able to graduate right after completing their studies at the MEI did not help as "In many institutions, having the studies complete but not papers is not enough to get an M.A salary." (Participant 48). This lack of economic benefit is due to the fact that a master's degree is only a requirement to teach in certain public universities such as the BUAP but does not necessarily have a direct impact on salaries. Extenuating circumstances such as the pandemic also seemed to have a negative short-term impact on salaries as participants perceive that "Right now, the situation has changed and decreased in all aspects, mainly economic ones." (Participant 88), and "the current economic advantage would be that "there is a job"." (Participant 87).

Section 4.4.1 above generally reveals that economic impact might be considered a strength of the program. A large majority of the graduates experienced between a 20% to 50% increase in salary either immediately or within five years of graduating from the program. Many of these increases were due to receiving promotions to more prestigious positions within their laboral context. Even the 34.8% of participants who reported little to no increase in salary recognized that their job security during a very difficult global pandemic was the result of acquiring their master's diploma. That said, we must again recognize that only 13.2% of all graduates earning above \$20,500 pesos a month is an unsatisfactory state of affairs within the field of ELT in Puebla. It raises questions about whether or not the alumni within the highest salary bracket are also working more than one job in order to meet their economic goals. The data shows that from the total number of participants that earn more than \$20,500 pesos, 58.3% of them have only one job while 16.7% of them have two jobs and 25% of their work in three job contexts. While the educational program is not responsible for setting average salaries in the regional job market, the study does shed light on the fact that the ELT profession in Mexico may be largely underpaid. Further investigation would need to be carried out to answer this question, but it does raise questions about the perceived importance of the need to teach and learn English in Puebla, the role of ELT professionals in this goal, and the wages earned by ELT professionals as compared to teachers in general education.

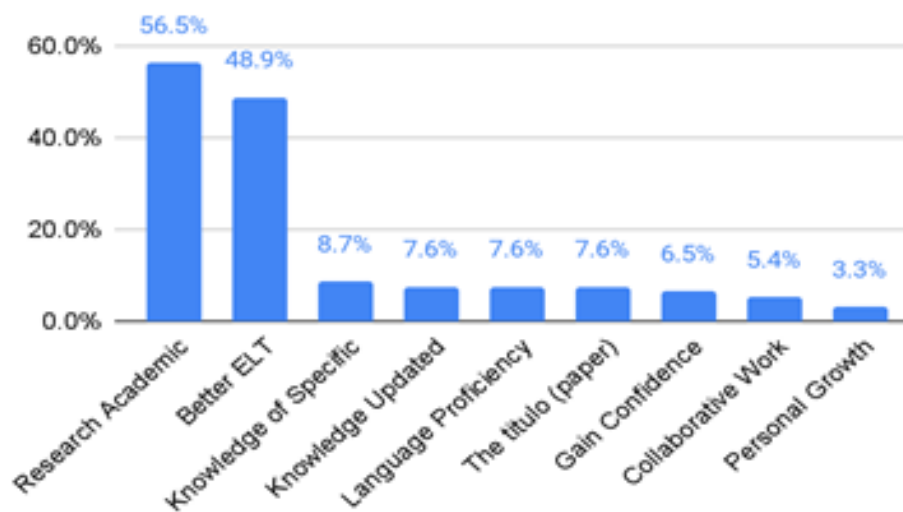
#### **4.5.2. COMPETENCE**

Updating teacher competencies is a vital objective of any master's program in ELT. English Language Teaching is a dynamic field that faces diverse challenges in modern times, and



the MEI highlights the importance of the acquisition of teacher competencies within its curricular documents. The graduates from the MEI obtained diverse knowledge and skills which were useful in their personal and professional life as a teacher, during and after graduating. They also mention the acquisition of cultural capital in the form of their master's diploma is important for their professional growth.

Chart 2. Competences



Participants describe the skills gained after completing the master's program, and which helped them to overcome the challenges of the job market. The majority of the participants, 56.6%, referred to having obtained tools related to research and academic writing (Chart 2). The participants who graduated from the MEI acquired research skills, which led them to engage in research practices after graduating as some participants mention "I learned more about teaching (...) but most importantly, to do research. Something that I love to do nowadays" (Participant 68), "I would say that the MEI helped me get

ideas about teaching strategies and the ability to help my colleagues regarding research projects.” (Participant 78). Another participant comments that “The main competence I took into was the research aspect in detail. To analyze in detail the job I do, in order to be a critical thinker and consequently a good language teacher.” (Participant 7). As a result of the research tools acquired, graduates were able to participate in professional activities such as presenting in conferences or publishing in academic journals, which increased their confidence as a professional as some of them stated “Having presented in different national and international conferences helped me increase knowledge and build confidence. I also think that the research abilities in general developed are of great use” (Participant 65), “I was also able to develop my projects in a very good way, and I could publish one article in the Mextesol Journal. I learned to carry out research and to share my results with colleagues for a productive result in the language teaching-learning process.” (Participant 37). These results were confirmed in interviews as participants mention: “This is one of the things the MEI helped me to start doing (...) I learn what are the things I don’t have to do for further research.” Another participant mentions “I am a researcher, so I love doing research and I have had the chance to do some research stages with

some national and international institutions (..) I have had the opportunity to publish”

The second most mentioned category by the participants was that they acquired a better understanding of the field of ELT in regard to the nature of teaching and learning in order to be able to face the challenges within their classrooms. In fact, 48.9% of the total participants report having obtained the necessary tools to improve their classes. They gain “Different perspectives to approach English Teaching, always considering the Mexican context.” (Participant 92). Another participant mentions acquiring “a better understanding of the teacher's environment and how the way we use every source can affect the development of the lessons and the impact that we have on the students learning. (...) Those are things that I didn't know, they were so important until I studied in the MEI.” (Participant 60).

Participants also mention having their knowledge updated (7.6%) and having acquired knowledge of specific subjects (8.7%) that facilitated their teaching. The knowledge acquired has been useful for the participants nowadays. One of the participants mentions “I can say that the best competency was knowledge. Not only regarding English Language or teaching strategies but also managing people, solving problems, supporting ideas,

researching and analyzing deeply to make real changes.” (Participant 53). Additionally, the participants reported having obtained knowledge of specific subjects: “It expanded my worldview and trained me to improve my self-study skills. The linguistic subjects helped me to better understand the language and how to teach it effectively. The use of technology in some of the subjects prepared me for the current situation.” (Participant 88), and also “The MEI refreshed my previous academic formation at the bachelor's degree. It reinforced classroom management, student competencies, and professional practice.” (Participant 18).

The competencies that 7.60 % of participants mention was their level of proficiency and another 7.60 % mention the word “*title*” as a vital acquisition in being able to apply for a better job as participant 12 wrote, “Having the master's title is the advantage to be able to work in a private institution.” or participant 34 “The truth is that it was just the “*título*” the one opening doors. I mean I learnt lots of things, and I have applied them, but employers look for the title.”

The other percentages of Chart 4.2.4 represent the competencies related to confidence when teaching, personal growth, and collaborative work. Participants such as 77, 65, and 90 agree that the MEI gave them confidence when teaching. Meanwhile, 5.40 %

of the participants mention having improved their collaborative work, such as participants 9, 60, and 90 who report: "I also felt better equipped to work with others." (Participant 77), "Also how to include everyone and work collaboratively to have professional development." (Participant 65), and "It has also changed my professional mindset, from an individualistic one to a collaborative one. I am now better prepared to work in teams with other professionals to improve our practice together." (Participant 90).

The results discussed above concerning competencies are encouraging yet raise several questions simultaneously. On the one hand, the majority of alumni report finishing their studies with the MEI having acquired two general areas of knowledge and skills: Research competencies and an enhanced understanding of the field of ELT. The program seems to be reaching its curricular objectives in regard to fostering an appreciation for the importance of research as well as its performance in local contexts. As a result, alumni continue to engage in professional activities such as congresses and publishing in academic journals. They also seem to have gained confidence in themselves as teachers and their ability to perform their professional duties thoughtfully and ethically. One might infer that "generally better understanding the field of ELT" is synonymous with "generally feeling confident about their ability to teach competently", and program stakeholders should be encouraged by the majority of students reporting these two areas of knowledge and skill as the primary outcomes of the educational program. If we consider that many of the MEI alumni also reported gains in their language proficiency, collaborative skills, knowledge

about the specific subject matter, and personal growth, the program's outcomes seem quite positive. That said, it should be recognized that few of the participants mentioned specific sets of knowledge and skills directly related to teaching. While remembering that the majority of the participants finished the program more than five years ago, and it might not be a reasonable expectation for them to mention "curricular specifics", the program explicitly categorizes itself as a "professionalization" master's rather than a "Research-oriented" master. As such, one might question the emphasis on research skills and a complete lack of reporting on activities like microteaching, classroom observation and management as well as other similar activities commonly associated with "professionalization" programs. This paucity of professionalization specifics might become a recommended point of focus during future curricular updates. It might be equally recommendable to consider shifting the focus of the educational program to a research orientation since the alumni do place a high value on the research knowledge and skills that they acquired during their studies and acknowledge the role that becoming researchers played in their professional development and advancement within the academic community.

#### **4.5.3. STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE**

When evaluating any educational program, it is important to know from its participants not only about the strengths of the program but also the areas that could be improved. This section will describe the strengths of the program which should be maintained and built upon as well as the opportunities for improvement according to its participants.

### 4.5.3.1. STRENGTH

The alumni of the Master’s program reported various characteristics that they believed to be strengths of the program. These strengths included characteristics such as doing research, the faculty members, human resources, the curriculum, participation in international events and exchanges, the CONACYT scholarship, being part of the PNCP, the use of English as a teaching medium, the infrastructure, extracurricular activities, or all of the above, to be the strengths of the program.

Chart 3. Strengths



The participants of this study mentioned the Human Resources, which includes the faculty members and their abilities, Coordinator, and administrative staff. This category was the most frequent answer reported by 72.8% of the participants. Most of the participants state that faculty members were the main reason for their successful graduation and had a great impact on their professional development. One of the participants reports, “The Faculty members. At the time I studied there the

majority of professors had a great impact on me.” (Participant 23). Another participant agrees, saying “The program is excellent, but the strongest area is composed of its teachers, if it wasn't for them we couldn't have completed the program, neither obtained the degree.” (Participant 23).

Participants also mentioned having experienced the support and experience not only from their teachers but also from the coordinator, as participants reported “The MEI program has great faculty members (...) Professors are always willing to help and share their knowledge and experience.” (Participant 43), “The doctors, who supported us to finish the thesis, helped us a lot.” (Participant 50), “There were very strong members in the staff that not only guided us but inspired us.” (Participant 70), and “I would like to remark the attention and support given by the MEIs coordination and all the staff in there. In addition, the mastery and expertise of the professors, who give the touch of uniqueness to the program.” (Participant 66).

The second most frequently reported strength is related to the program’s curriculum. This category was mentioned by 46.7% of the participants. Most of them mention that the curriculum was highly evaluated as participant 54 wrote “The MEI program



offered the curriculum I had been looking for and expecting and more." There were other participants that gain needed knowledge like participants 12, 59, or 75, "I graduated from the first generation, the program was being tested in that time but I consider I learned a lot from almost all the curriculum," (Participant 12), "According to my personal experience, MEI syllabus was an excellent educational program for me because I could get more knowledge about teaching and learning trends." (Participant 59), and "In the same way, the curriculum design focused not only on the teaching area but on the linguistics area makes it a complete approach." (Participant 75).

16.3% of the participants stated that infrastructure was also a category that they perceived as being one of the strengths of the MEI program. They thought that the infrastructure was satisfactory, or that they were able to get a classroom to study as participant 77 mentioned, "Infrastructure, I remember that in that time the teachers were asking for classrooms and places in which we could study and use when we had free time. We got one, it was a small room but I remember I could go and study with no problem." Participant 84 reported the infrastructure exceeding her expectations: "I was not expecting the infrastructure we had. I was pleasantly surprised."

Another category that was mentioned by 14.1% of the participants was participation in international events and exchanges. Participants mentioned either being able to learn from traveling abroad, having national or international collaboration, or having an international professor as their teacher. Participants 4, 6, 16, and 85 mention that "The visit to schools in Colorado" (Participant 4), "Collaboration with the University of Denver" (Participant 6), "It promotes national and international networks that enrich the program and students' experiences and learning." (Participant 16), "(...) had a teacher from Spain, opened the horizon for many of us. Also, the support for presenting abroad is a plus" (Participant 85). This category is connected with the following category mentioned by the participants, which is research. 10.9% of the participants respond that research was an important aspect of the program. Participants 1 and 65 reported: "Personally, I believe that the strength MEI had when I studied it was its orientation towards doing research." (Participant 1), and "I think the program has a great focus on research competencies. We were highly encouraged to present our research, the classes were very well given and we were very productive in regards to writing." (Participant 65)

There are two categories that were mentioned by less than 10% of the participants as shown in Chart 4.4.3.1. In these categories, the participants stated that for them one of the strengths was related to the fact that the program is part of the PNCP and the possibility of applying and receiving a scholarship. As the program became part of the PNCP in 2015, and therefore being able to get a scholarship, 5.4% of the participants from the 6th generation onwards mentioned it as a strength. At the same time, 2.2% of the participants from the first five generations also mentioned having a scholarship as a strength. The second category with less than 10%, is that English was and is used as the principal language of transmission. Participants 16, 38, and 87 mentioned "I think that the principal strength is that the program is part of "Posgrados de Calidad" and this grants you access to more job opportunities." (Participant 87), "1) The program is given in English, (...) 3) It gives scholarships for students" (Participant 16), and "I loved the fact that all the subjects were in English." (Participant 38).

#### **4.5.3.2. OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE**

All programs have characteristics that stand out as strengths; however, there are always opportunities to grow, and this program is not the exception. The following part of the study will describe the different categories in which, according to the participants, the master's program should improve. The participants mentioned some characteristics such as research, curriculum, online resources, foreign academic exchanges, professors, infrastructure/resources, schedule, and graduates.

Chart 4. Opportunities to improve 1

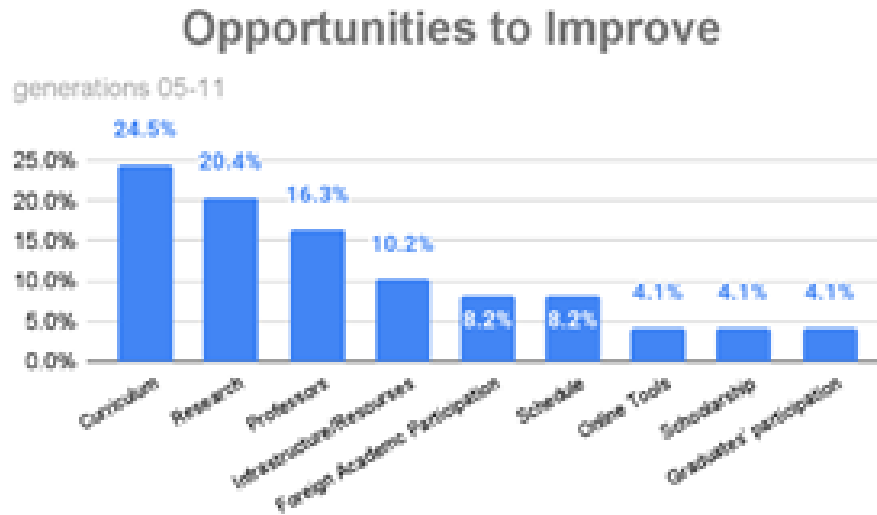
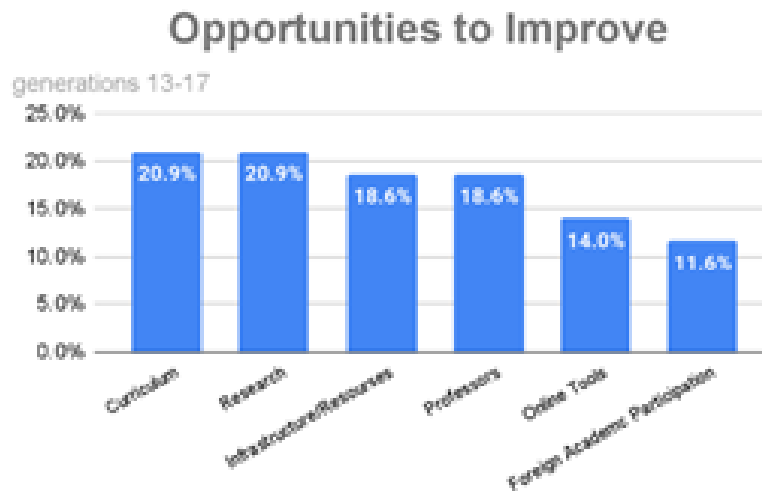


Chart 5. Opportunities to improve 2



The master's program in teaching English from the BUAP has not always been part of the PNPC, when it took a different direction. Chart 4 and Chart 5 show the different categories chosen by the participants from the generations before entering the PNPC and

the generations after entering the program and the change of direction. The categories schedule (8.2%), scholarships (4.1%), and graduates' participation (4.1%) were not consistent in both graphics, as, in the second one, participants did not mention them as characteristics to be improved. However, there are six categories that both groups of generations mentioned as things to be improved. The curriculum was one of these categories which was shared by both groups of participants. 24.6% of the participants from the first generations explained they would have wanted specific subjects and topics including not only international perspectives but also the Mexican perspective on the issues like participant 2 "But something that can improve is including current trends in ELT, interdisciplinary subjects and writing and research." (Participant 2), "Focused on the subjects that you could include: research studies (second part), material development and distance learning." (Participant 8), "Within the curriculum I would like you to include subjects related to obtaining language teaching certifications." (Participant 14), "(...) more writing courses to learn how to publish articles in national and international magazines. Some courses to see what is being researched in international universities." (Participant 21), "Keep working on updating the teaching and research area (because it is the main focus), but also (and mainly) subjects related to linguistics or discourse analysis and technology." (Participant 28), and "Curriculum. I remember that we talked and learned from different theories, authors from

different countries but the reality of teaching in Mexico is very different from that.” (Participant 41).

Along the same lines, 20.9% of the participants from generation 2013-2017 also consider curriculum as a category with the most details to improve. The participants mentioned: “I consider that the program is quite satisfactory as it is. But if you want egresados to work as coordinators, perhaps you need to think in including some subjects related to administrative topics.” (Participant 66), “Maybe to teach deeply more subjects related to critical discourse analysis.” (Participant 67), “(...) providing a curriculum that promotes specialization in different lines of inquiry.” (Participant 70), “Curriculum: Less theory and more practice.” (Participant 88) or “More student participation in the selection of elective courses.” (Participant 90).

Improving the curriculum was also mentioned in the interview as some of the participants mentioned that there were subjects that were repetitive from the BA and that they feel they should decide on the optative as they ended working in different levels of teaching, and the subjects could be more dynamic. Interview 10 mentioned “ some courses also can get better (...) some courses that were not really what was expected some of them felt like a refresh

like a quick review of what we saw in the BA and we didn't really have the opportunity to go in deep as it was meant to be" meanwhile interviewed 6 "I needed more, like something more dynamic (...) when I studied it was really calm you know the pace, and like a lot of literature we had to read a lot of literature and do presentations but I don't know something like more I would say fun" and interviewed 3 mentioned, "maybe being able to, I don't know, give us a couple of electives maybe it could be because even though it is an English teaching program not everybody like teaches the same way or the same kind of topics for the same kind of places".

In addition to the curriculum, research was named by participants from both generation groups, in the first by 20.4% and in the second by 20.9%. Despite being considered a strength of the program, participants believe that there are details that need to be considered for its improvement. They believe that it is important to start projects, including the thesis, from the beginning of the program to be able to publish as participants 4, 18, and 65 mentioned "Start doing projects, apply them, analyze and evaluate in order to improve education in our educational institutions. Also as MEI students, we need to be part of a research program I mean be an assistant of a researcher." (Participant 4), "Being taught, guided and to develop your thesis project since the beginning of the program. Being taught and

guided to write academic articles to publish in magazines to get a promotion." (Participant 18), "I would keep focusing on encouraging or making it a requirement to publish an article." (Participant 65). As it is important to write also guidance is needed as participants 60, 89, and 91 mentioned; "Choosing a research topic is always hard, maybe giving a more detailed guidance through the tendency in the research field would have been of great help," (Participant 60), "The thesis advisor options, we should be able to choose two advisors." (Participant 89), "I think that it can be improved by focusing more on research (having more research subjects in the curriculum)." (Participant 91) and "(...) but unfortunately they didn't teach us how to write an article and, and right now it is very basic," (Interview Participant). Being able to access resources and technologies for improving their research, was also mentioned by the participants, "online resources and techniques to help research more effectively" (Participant 39), "Specialized library for the mei. More research training." (Participant 42), "(...)Another important thing as a student I was not allowed to access current biography." (Participant 18).

18.6% and 16.3 % of the participants from generations 2005-2011 and from generations 2013-2017 respectively commented that the category needed to be considered



for improvement is the professors. In the matter that some of the participants mentioned that they had good professors and in most of the cases they were pretty well prepared, the participants also mentioned that there were some professors that were not up to the level needed. As participants 24 and 25 wrote, others also think "A constant evaluation of the professors, some of them have bad habits. They need to be rotated or give them a constant feedback from their classes." (Participant 24) and that "students should evaluate the professors" (Participant 25). Additionally, participants wrote about the lack of preparation and focus when giving their classes, which is corroborated by participants' interviews. In the interviews, they mentioned "(...) they can fix and they can improve in their program just take a look at the real professors and researchers who can help their student not the ones that are using them to transcribe the information or just to get paid or to cover hour they need to cover at their school." (Interviewed 4), "I think the MEI teachers have to be carefully chosen to teach a specific course in the program. I had one teacher whose performance was really questionable; to be honest, I felt like I was in the BA program. She has a PhD and I don't think she organized her course very well. That was not the best way to teach a course in the MEI program." (Participant 33), and "Selection of some professors. It doesn't matter how many degrees you have or how much you pretend to be nice to your colleagues or students. If you do not care or do not know about what you teach, it shows! Do not get me

wrong, I also loved some of them as well." (Participant 56). Finally, participants also mention the lack of communication among the faculty members and between them and the student which has a negative effect on students: "Better relationship between professors, the tension is too obvious." (Participant 72), "Better communication between some of the faculty and students in regards to feedback." (Participant 82), and "The academic groups in MEI are fractured, they don't work together. This isn't good at all for students, it's bad for the institution itself." (Participant 85).

In the era that we are living in and considering that each generation is more adapted to technology, participants mention the importance of including online tools as well. Both groups of generations mention this category, the first with 4.1% of the participants while the second group of generations was mentioned by 14% of the participants. They think that "Now that we are working online, it could be great to provide tools for teaching online and also how to evaluate in this way." (Participant 37), to improve "Mainly the library, to have access to more digital books or journals." (Participant 68), "Courses on digital resources could be included. For example, digital tools such as electronic boards." (Participant 87), or "The use of platforms" (Participant 44). In the interviews, this category was also mentioned as "to implement a little bit of technological classes" (Interviewed 7).

As some participants, from the first group of generations, are aware of the changes that have happened in the MEI program, they mentioned that the infrastructure and the foreign exchanges are two more categories to be improved. 10.2% and 18.6% of the participants from the first and second groups of generations respectively, wrote the infrastructure as one of the categories to improve. Alumni ask to improve "Infrastructure in terms of a more equipped classroom" (Participant 57) or "to change the chairs" (Interviewed 6). As far as foreign academic participation is concerned the alumni consider this an important part and it should be considered for improvement. They wrote that there should be more exchange programs and experts or foreign teachers to be part of the MEI program as the next participants "Promote more exchanges to the USA" (Participant 37), "1-Interaction with some other experts related to the field 2-Student cultural exchanges" (Participant 43), "Offer more chances for exchange programs." (Participant 54) or to "have professors from exchange programs to be part of the teaching staff" (Participant 71).

As things have changed over the years, there are still some factors that are in the process of improving. The findings above indicate that the way most of the program is being managed has had a positive impact on the alumni. MEI participants consider human resources as the number one strength of the program, yet it is not 100% optimal as it was

the third most reported factor to be considered for improvement. All of the participants' suggestions should be taken very seriously, and some of the comments were somewhat disturbing. It seems clear that there are occasional breakdowns in the professionalism of the program's teaching staff, a desire for more international exchange opportunities, additional mentorship in the area of research and writing for professional journals, and increased emphasis on technology in the field of ELT. These areas of opportunity should be presented to the MEI faculty, worked on collaboratively, and solutions incorporated into future curriculum updates.

#### **4.5.4. COMPETITIVENESS**

In order to obtain a satisfactory job with good benefits and salary in any field, having just a BA is not enough, making postgraduate programs like the MEI of great importance. This program has opened its door to professionals within the field of ELT as well as to those with different professional backgrounds. One of the aims of the MEI is to formalize the education of practicing teachers with professional backgrounds outside the field of ELT. In the following section, the participants' perceptions concerning their level of competitiveness within the labor market will be discussed.

Chart 6. Competitiveness



When the participants were asked to write whether they were competitive once they completed the program, 17.4% of them answered that they felt competitive and confident enough to search for a better job. Similarly, 19.6% of the participants mentioned being competent enough to look for a job, apply for it, and even get the job. Participants reported being more prepared than their colleagues, feeling more competent, or having credentials that demonstrated that they are more prepared with comments like: "I was able to compete because I had a paper that showed I was more prepared in my professional area." (Participant 45), "Yes, having a masters is always a plus and it makes it easier to get a job. It places you over many people." (Participant 74), "Yes, having a master's degree has allowed me to increase my opportunities for better job positions." (Participant 84), "(...) I could feel that what I learnt was useful. Before getting to the MEI

program I felt I knew nothing, clueless. But after, I gained confidence, I felt I was ready to face challenges and look for the opportunities I wanted." (Participant 77) or "In the case of the Language teaching market yes because most of colleagues (according to my generation) have a master degree in Spanish." (Participant 12). At the same time, there are comments which agree with being competent after the program but also the need for other tools, such as Participant 14 "Yes I could say I was competent to work in recognized universities. However language certifications are gaining more ground in labor market" (Participant 14).

Other participants stressed the importance of their increased research knowledge and skills in relation to competitiveness. 10.9% of the participants mentioned that this area of their learning made them more competitive. Participant 28 mentioned "(...) The MEI program offers what ELT teachers need to compete. However, at university level, there are more requirements like research, but no doubt the MEI provides the basis to carry out this activity." Other participants reported similar perspectives. "(...) The experiences, the knowledge acquired and the brief stay for research at the university of Denver made me feel more confident and competitive." (Participant 6) or "I had the idea that I had so much to say but I had to do it through research

and present formal papers to prove my point of view, it was really helpful" (Participant 17).

The MEI program not only gives its graduates knowledge and credentials but also the confidence to become better professionals in the field. 13% of the participants mentioned having gained this confidence as mentioned by some participants. "I am more confident and I have the prestige of being a MEI graduated teacher." (Participant 27), "(...) In my situation, the MEI helped me to gain confidence for teaching adults and university students. Something I hadn't done before since I felt I was not ready to do so." (Participant 49), "Yes, before I didn't have the opportunity/confidence to teach at university level." (Participant 69), "I think I received an excellent preparation and feel confident about what I know compared to what other teachers do in their classes or with the students." (Participant 78), and "DEFINATELY YES, I WAS MORE CONFIDENT OF MY KNOWLEDGE AND POTENTIAL AS A TEACHER" (Participant 79).

The majority of the participants mentioned having gained competitiveness and being positive about their time in the program, although, there is also a small percentage that believe that the job market has become so competitive that a master's degree is no longer

sufficient. 6.5% of the participants responded negatively when asking them about how competitive they felt after completing the program. Some of these participants mentioned: "No. Like I said before, the job market is highly demanding and an MA seems not to be enough to get a plaza at a University. Not even the PhD. Other aspects are considered such as the research trajectory, the extent to which the candidate is able to align project proposals to the interests of the Cuerpos Académicos, and so on. Yet, the MA does provide the basis for further development." (Participant 10), "Not really, I felt the MEI was the bridge between being a "licenciatura" graduate and a linguist/scientist. I think that employers do not really appreciate the knowledge we get in MEI:" (Participant 38), "Not really. Just a little. Again, because of the brief actualisation on the field. But learning more about pedagogy and materials, even syllabus design might have been more useful." (Participant 88) and "I know I am better, however, the ELT market is too competitive and good opportunities are so low, that having a MA is not enough." (Participant 89).

Increased competitiveness seems to largely be considered a strength of the program according to the program alumni. While a small percentage of participants correctly point out that the job market is getting increasingly competitive, they also recognize that the



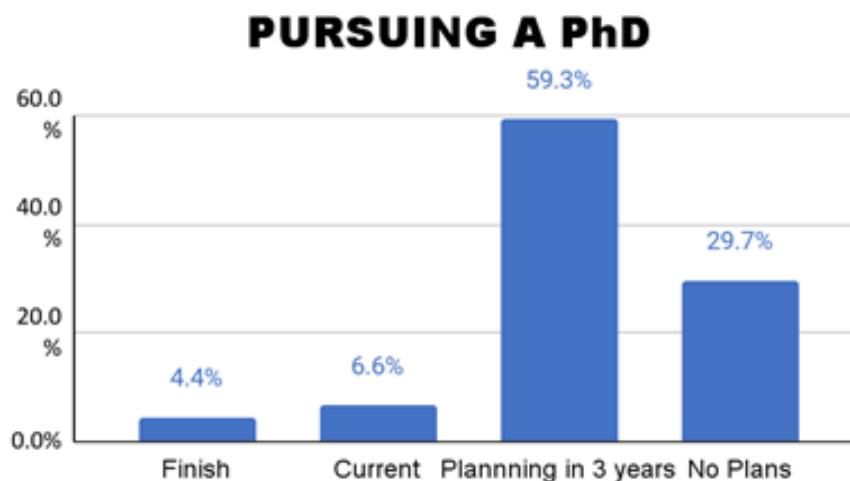
master's credentials that the program provides are indispensable in building a portfolio that increases their competitiveness. While some of the recommendations of participants such as 'a greater emphasis on language certifications' are probably not within the confines of a postgraduate program, the program might consider doing greater needs analysis within the job market and offer current students as well as alumni opportunities to earn additional credentials during their time in the program. These might include diploma courses in technology, teaching certifications and more that could complement accredited courses within the existing curriculum.

#### **4.6. PH.D. INFORMATION**

After concluding a master's program, one must consider whether options exist that will allow graduates to continue moving forward with their professional development.

Graduates can either pursue another master's program or pursue a doctorate degree. For the purposes of this research and the MEI's stakeholders, the questionnaire included three questions related to the graduates' interest in pursuing a doctorate degree. According to Chart 7, at the moment of answering the questionnaire, 4.4% of the participants had already finished a doctorate program while 6.6% of the participants were in a doctorate program.

Chart 7. Pursuing a PhD



As Chart 7 demonstrates, 59.3% of the participants of the MEI have in their plans within the next 3 years to enroll in a doctorate program. As seen in some of the comments from the previous sections, the participants are thinking of enrolling in another program that will further enrich their professional development. As the job market continues to become more competitive, they recognize the current need to expand their educational credentials. 68.1% of the participants who plan on studying a Ph.D. are interested in a program that is taught in English, as can be seen in Chart 8. A smaller number of alumni report being interested in programs that focus on Spanish, French, German, Indigenous languages, or Russian. Furthermore, these participants mentioned several areas of interest that included: Applied Linguistics, ELT, Research Teaching Development, Education, and Sociolinguistics. It seems that a significant number of MEI alumni are currently looking for a Ph.D. program in various related fields, all of which connect to the study of languages and/or Applied Linguistics. The faculty of languages of the BUAP should consider whether

or not they have the resources to develop such a program in order to meet the continuing educational needs of their alumni. If such a program is feasible, it's creation might be recommendable. If not, the institution should consider how their alumni's future needs might be met as well as how the Faculty of Languages, BUAP might begin to expand their current capacities so that a doctorate program can become feasible in the near future.

Chart 8. Language of PhD



#### 4.7. CONCLUSIONS

The current study intended to explore the effects that graduating from the MEI program at BUAP had on its alumni. In order to achieve this aim, a questionnaire with 35 items was sent to all the graduates of the program. Likewise, fourteen participants were chosen randomly to be interviewed in order to be able to corroborate and enrich the questionnaire data. It is important to mention that, in fact, all the participants notice an economic increment in their salaries after completing and graduating from the program. Additionally, participants report

an increased level of research competence, ELT knowledge and language proficiency, which made them more competitive in the job market and attain better jobs, often in higher levels of education where they were previously not viable candidates. Participants also highlighted strengths of the program such as Human Resources, curriculum, and international participation. However, some of the same areas that participants considered to be strengths, curriculum, professors, research mentoring among others were also considered areas that could continue to improve in order to maintain the quality of the program for stakeholders for years to come.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

Having presented an overview of the study in Chapter 1, a theoretical overview of the literature in Chapter 2, a description of the methodological procedures used to gather and analyze data in Chapter 3, and a presentation-discussion of the results of the data analysis in Chapter 4, this chapter will present the general conclusions that can be drawn from the investigative process and the results that were yielded. The Chapter is organized into the following sections. First, a discussion of key findings will be presented, accompanied with a discussion of their implications. Second, a discussion of the investigation's contributions to the research context is presented. Third, the study's limitations and recommendations for further research are discussed. Finally, the chapter's conclusion is presented.

In order to remind the readers of the research questions, they are listed as follow:

- What impact on economic status do participants report as a result of successfully graduating from the maestría en Enseñanza del Inglés of the facultad de Lenguas of the Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla?
- What impact on professional competitiveness do participants report as a result of successfully graduating from the previously mentioned context?

- What impact on professional competence do participants report as a result of successfully graduating from the previously mentioned context?
- What do the participants in the previously mentioned context consider to be the principal strengths and opportunities for improvement for the program

## **5.2. DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS**

In any field it is important that professionals are updated, refined and well-prepared as needs are constantly evolving. This contributes to the pertinence of postgraduate programs for teachers, particularly for those who come from fields outside the area of teacher education. It is equally important and necessary to have programs updated to the current needs of professionals in order to enhance the quality of educational programs, which is primarily achieved through program evaluation. This is where the current research becomes relevant and whose key findings will be discussed below.

The MEI program from the BUAP has opened its door to eight generations at the completion of this research, and seven of them participated in the study with a total of 92 participants. It is relevant to highlight the fact that the majority of the graduates of this program are women, who seem to be the primary practitioners in the field of ELT in Mexico. The program largely provides services to the Mexican population, although its doors are open to other nationalities, and American, British, and Bulgarian students have coursed the program. The program has also largely provided services to professionals with an undergraduate background in ELT who had between 3 to 20 years of experience when

applying for the program. As the program has progressed from generation to generation, the background of students has diversified considerably in regard to both nationality and educational history.

One of the research questions, which are listed above, refers to the economic impact having completed the MEI brought to the participants. There was an increase of at least 25% in their income compared with the professionals who have only a BA. This increment was also due to the fact that a Master's program diploma is required to teach at university level, thus participants were able to change jobs to gain economic stability. And although in the majority of the cases, this stability was obtained with a single job, there are still some participants who were required to have two or more jobs in order to meet their financial goals. This study also showed that the majority of the participants do not earn more than \$20,400 pesos per month.

The research questions and the questionnaire also explore the competencies or tools the participants gained throughout the program. The most significant tools mentioned both in the questionnaire and in the interviews, were the abilities to do research and professional writing. The importance given by the faculty members to this aspect during the classes, was of great use to the participants as they report continuing to use it in their lives as a teacher. Additionally, being able to better understand the ELT field and gaining confidence were other reported strengths of the program which should be built upon and reinforced by the stakeholders in order to preserve the quality of the program.

Human resources were stated as the biggest strength of the program, which includes the faculty members, the coordinator and university staff. They are the people who direct and make the program possible, so it is important that participants recognize them. Simultaneously, breakdowns in teacher quality seem to occasionally occur, and more rigorous attention to which professor teaches what course is considered by participants an opportunity for improvement. Participants also emphasized the need for students to evaluate teacher performance continuously in order to ensure that course goals and student needs are being met. The curriculum was another aspect which was considered by the participants as a strength. This aspect gave the graduates the knowledge to better understand the field and to better participate in it. In spite of this category being mentioned as a strength, it is also a category that offers opportunities for improvement. While participants agree that the curriculum is relevant, it could include subjects that better relate to the Mexican educational context, language certification, technology, administration and publishing in professional journals.

Competitiveness was also explored in the study in order to answer one of the research questions. At the end of the program, graduates felt competitive enough to apply for a new job and because the program provided them with higher credentials, they often obtained their new employment goals, including working in a university setting. Research competencies was a prevalent category throughout the data, and participants reported that the ability to conduct research contributed to their competitiveness in the job market as they



felt confident enough in their research skills to continue engaging in the process after graduating. Research competency is an aspect of the program that should be reinforced and extended to the earliest stages of the master's degree.

Finally, the last part of the questionnaire was about the interest of the participants in enrolling in a Ph.D. program. What should be interesting to the stakeholders is the number of participants who are interested in enrolling on a Ph.D. program, which is more than a half. These participants are interested in enrolling in a program in which the main language is English, French, German, Indigenous languages, or Russian. Furthermore, they are interested in programs related to Applied Linguistics, ELT, Research Teaching Development, Education, and Sociolinguistics.

### **5.3. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RESEARCH CONTEXT**

The current study provided concrete information about the reported experiences of eight generations of MEI, BUAP students and the manner that having graduated from the program has impacted their professional trajectory. It provides information from two distinct types of participants, four generations of Pre-PNPC students and four generations of Post-PNPC students. As such, it provides a picture of how the program has progressed (or not) over the years. The study should allow stakeholders of the program to identify program strengths and build upon them as well as identify opportunities for improvement. Interestingly, many of the program's strengths were also identified as opportunities for improvement, making future action plans to improve the program complicated to navigate.

Fortunately, the qualitative data helps to clarify the mystery behind such conundrums, and areas that are reported as both strengths and problematic can be addressed systematically and collectively if the study is adequately disseminated to the MEI faculty.

As any developing program, it has strengths and weaknesses. The program stakeholders should minimize the program's flaws and take advantage of these opportunities to improve the program by continuing to invest in exchange programs as it will give future graduates a broader perspective of the field and improve their teaching by learning from other colleges. The data suggests that it might be advisable to add more practice to the curriculum, add subjects that might help STs obtain administrative positions, and give students more opportunities to participate in the decision-making processes regarding elective courses. Perhaps most importantly in modern times, it is recommendable to increase subjects related to the technology used in teaching in and out of the classroom.

#### **5.4. LIMITATIONS TO THE STUDY**

The MEI program has fostered eight generations and seven of them were involved in these studies. Even though a great number of each generation participated, it would have been optimal to have 100% of the graduates participate. The limited number of participants who were interviewed could also be considered a limitation. Finally, the amount of data that was produced was difficult to manage, and the number of human resources available to process the data was limited only to the researcher. Additional perspectives from multiple analysts may have yielded broader insights into the results.

## **5.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

The current study may give rise to various directions for further research. It might be interesting researching about Native vs Non-native teachers in Puebla as well as male versus female perspectives. Further research on the reasons for studying a master's degree from the last generations might yield interesting insights about the target audience of the program. It might be also interesting to know if the results repeat in other institutions with similar programs related to ELT. A larger study to compare the effect graduates identify from not only public institutions but also from private institutions could provide interesting and useful insights into the postgraduate market in Mexico. Finally, it would be recommendable to repeat these kinds of impact studies periodically. It would be also interesting to look at the results from each generation and make a comparison from the first one up to the current one in order to observe if the changes made by the stakeholders were actually noticed by the participants and how categories would change from generation to generation.

## **5.6. CONCLUSION**

The process of producing a research paper, from the beginning when you are trying to choose the topic all the way to actually writing the first ideas, the research questions, developing the tools to gather the data, analysing it, and writing it, sounds easy but actually doing it is complicated and takes long time to achieve it. Since the beginning when I stumbled into the idea of this research paper, I was interesting in, one knowing other generations perspectives and two, doing a research that might have an impact on the

program or even in somehow in the field and three, considering that in our context ELT not only refers teaching Spanish speakers but also the preparation of those teachers, who not being natives speaker of the language, have to be prepared to teach those learners who would need the language to communicate with the world.

As these last words are coming together I realize that research and writing are an important part of the program. As this topic was interesting and while the organization of it was overwhelming, every participant's comment or answer attracted me more and more first to read every single one of those answers and then to put them into words. This process was confusing in parts, time consuming and complicated in others, but I learned more about the field, about the importance of SLTE, about doing research and about the effect of completing a master's program. Hopefully I will be able to follow my future colleges after completing the program.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix A. Questionnaire

### MEI graduates research

This questionnaire is meant to explore the impact that studying the Maestría en la Enseñanza del Inglés, BUAP had on your professional trajectory as well as to gather feedback about particular aspects of the program. We do ask for your name so that we might contact you in order to further explore your views in an interview for this investigation. Nevertheless, your participation in the research will remain completely confidential. Thank you for participating in this impact study, it will take 10 to 15 minutes to answer this questionnaire.

\*Obligatorio

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#### Personal Information

1. 1) Last Name \*

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2. 2) First name(s) \*

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3. 3) Gender \*

*Marca solo un óvalo.*

Male

Female

Other

4. 4) Age \*

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5. 5) Nationality(ies) \*

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6. 6) Mother Tongue \*

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7. 7) Generation in which you study the MEI \*

*Marca solo un óvalo.*

- 2005 - 07
- 2007 - 09
- 2009 - 11
- 2011 - 13
- 2013 - 15
- 2015 - 17
- 2017 - 19
- 2019 - 21

Additional degrees in higher education

This section refers to your studies just fill in the questions that apply  
Fill the following part with:  
Name of degree:  
University:  
Year of graduation:

8. 8) Principal Bachelor's Degree \*

Name of degree / University / Year of Titulacion

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9. 9) Additional Bachelor's Degree

Name of degree / University / Year of Titulacion

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10. 10) Principal Master's Degree \*

Name of degree / University / Year of Titulacion

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11. 11) Additional Master's Degree

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12. 12) Principal Doctorate Degree

Name of degree / University / Year of Titulacion

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13. 13) Specialization

Name of degree / University / Year of Titulacion

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Laboral context

14. 14) Teaching experience before entering the MEI \*

*Marca solo un óvalo.*

- None
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years

15. 15) Laboral Context Number of institutions you are working-teaching at currently

*Marca solo un óvalo.*

- 1
- 2
- 3

16. 16) What kind of institution is your principal job? \*

Only mark the row that applies to your PRINCIPAL Job. Mark "does not apply" to the additional rows.

*Selecciona todas las opciones que correspondan.*

	Does not apply	Full time	Half time	Hourly wage
Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Independent own institution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. 17) What kind of institution is your secondary job?

Only mark the row that applies to your SECONDARY Job. Mark "does not apply" to the additional rows.

*Selecciona todas las opciones que correspondan.*

	Does not apply	Full time	Half time	Hourly wage
Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Independent own institution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



18. 18) What kind of institution is your third job?

Only mark the row that applies to your THIRD Job. Mark "does not apply" to the additional rows.

*Selecciona todas las opciones que correspondan.*

	Does not apply	Full time	Half time	Hourly wage
Public	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Private	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Independent own institution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. 19) Current Job Title at your primary job \*

\_\_\_\_\_

20. 20) Additional job titles

\_\_\_\_\_

21. 21) Let's add this...Considering the income earned from all of the jobs you listed above, how much is your monthly earnings: \*

*Marca solo un óvalo.*

- 9,600 to 14,500 pesos
- 14,600 to 20,400 pesos
- 20,500 to 26,000 pesos
- above 26,000 pesos

MEI program

22. 22) What were your main reasons for applying to a master's program? \*

*Selecciona todas las opciones que correspondan.*

- Professional Development
- Economic Reasons
- Personal Reasons

23. 23) Which of the following elements from the MEI influenced your decision into choosing the MEI program (more than one option could be chosen)? \*

*Selecciona todas las opciones que correspondan.*

- BUAP prestige
- Program prestige (PNPC)
- Faculty members
- Location of the program
- Curriculum
- CONACYT scholarship
- Other
- None

24. 24) Give a small explanation regarding the options chosen in the previous question \*

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25. 25) Briefly describe the impact that being a MEI graduate has given to you regarding job opportunities (for example promotions, opportunities in other institutions, job positions, other. \*

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26. 26) Briefly describe if there have been any economic benefits as a result of graduating from the MEI. If possible estimate the percentage of increased income studying the masters provided \*

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27. 27) Briefly describe the principal tools/competencies obtained as a result of studying the MEI curriculum that helped you face the challenges of the job market. \*

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28. 28) Briefly describe the tools/competencies you were expecting but believe were lacking in the MEI curriculum which would have helped you face challenges in the job market. \*

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29. 29) Briefly describe the principal strengths of the MEI as an educational program. For example curriculum, human resources, infrastructure, and others. \*

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30. 30) Mention the elements which you think the MEI could be improved. \*

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31. 31) Do you believe that the MEI prepared you to confront the challenges that you face in your labor context? yes/ no explain \*

Please provide a brief description

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32. 32) After coursing the MEI, did you feel like you were better able to compete for the kinds of job opportunities that interested you in the English Language Teaching market? yes/ no explain \*

Please provide a brief description

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#### Doctorate studies

33. 33) Regarding pursuing a doctorate degree, choose the option that best describes your situation \*

*Marca solo un óvalo.*

- I have finished
- I am currently studying it
- I am planning on studying it in the next three years.
- I have no plans

34. 34) What language(s) would you like to focus on?

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35. 35) What are your areas of interest regarding a possible doctorate degree? \*

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Thank you for taking the time to answer this questionnaire.

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Google no creó ni aprobó este contenido.

Google Formularios

## **Appendix B. Interview schedule**

Hi (participant's name). I'd like to thank you for agreeing to participate in this study and taking the time to be interviewed. Your questionnaire answers were interesting to us, and we would like to explore perspectives on the MEI further, which is why we asked you to participate in the interview phase. If you have any questions or doubts during the interview process, please don't hesitate to express them. We don't want to take up too much of your time, so if you are ready, we can begin. Would you mind if we record the interview in order to facilitate the transcription process? You will remain completely anonymous, and no audio-visual material will be included in the results.

### **QUESTIONS**

- 1. The first question I'd like to ask you is very general.  
How do you believe that studying the MEI has had the most significant impact in your life?**

**(This impact doesn't necessarily need to be academic or professional. It could be related to personal fulfillment or network development... Whatever you believe has created the most significant impact.)**

- 2. The second issue that I would like to explore is related to you as a researcher. Have you continued to perform research since you graduated from the MEI? And if yes, could you describe your most significant projects and accomplishments as a researcher?**

- 3. The third issue is related to Teacher Autonomy in the classroom. You commented in your questionnaire results that the institutional policies where you work do not allow you to fully explore many of the practices that you learned in the MEI. Would you like to comment further on that issue?**

**or if they didn't actually mention that in the questionnaire responses...**

**The third issue is related to Teacher Autonomy in the classroom. Do the institutional policies where you work allow you to put into practice what you learned in your master's program?**

- 4. If you could make one recommendation to the MEI Team, what would you suggest?**